



FUN TIONAL MEDI CINE



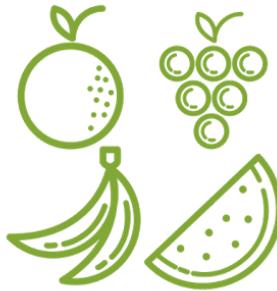
YOUR UNIQUE
WELLNESS PLAN



BY
DR. GREGORY BRENNAN

Functional Medicine

Your Unique Wellness Plan



A Guide to Understanding Functional Medicine
As You Choose a Practitioner

By

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Preface: Functional Medicine

Functional Medicine is about addressing the causes behind illness. It takes into account that every person's medical history is different and that not every person should be treated the same way for the same symptoms. Dr. Brennan uses various indicated lab tests, personal and family history, and more to create a plan for restoring you to optimal health. He looks at the details of your health profile and you work together with him to overcome obstacles to health and get you into the best lifestyle possible. Functional Medicine is more than seeing a doctor, it is partnering with him for comprehensive, lifelong health.

Functional Medicine Addresses These Common Conditions

- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Female hormone problems
- Depression
- Digestion problems
- Autoimmune disorders

A Note About This Book:

This report is from an interview between Daniel Samms of Roaring Pages (Roaring Business Growth Solutions) and Dr. Gregory Brennan, D.C. In an effort to get this information out as quickly as possible, we have published the transcript. Our hope for this book is that it helps you gain an understanding of Functional Medicine and the benefits of choosing the right Functional Medicine practitioner.

What is Functional Medicine?

Daniel Samms: Well, I'm here today with Dr. Gregory Brennan, and he's going to tell us a little bit about functional medicine and the incredible changes that that has been bringing about in a lot of people. We're going to talk a little bit about care. And so my first question-- first of all, thanks for being with us Dr. Brennan.

Dr. Greg Brennan: Well it is nice to be here with you Dan.

Dan: Thanks. Could you just tell us a little bit, what is functional medicine?

Dr. Brennan: I'll read what the Institute of Functional Medicine says the definition is. They say, "functional medicine addresses the underlying causes of disease, using a systems-orientated approach and engaging both patient and practitioner in a therapeutic relationship. Both patient and practitioner in a therapeutic relationship." A key point is, "addressing the underlying causes of disease and--" well that's a thought-provoking concept. That is a key concept that is missing in many people's healthcare: pursuing the underlying causes of diseases. In America, the system is very good at treating symptoms, and when you're in horrible pain you need

that addressed. If you go to the emergency room you want symptoms addressed. And they'll also be looking for causes for the acute episode. Where the health care system fails in America, is looking for the causes of chronic diseases.

So you go to your medical doctor with high blood pressure. They can treat that. They can treat the numbers. They have medications to treat the numbers. But why is your blood pressure high? A lot of research shows that it's hyperinsulinemia. Your insulin levels are too high. You need to address that, because that makes your body hold onto sodium more efficiently, and also makes you get excrete/urinate magnesium. So the result is that your blood pressure goes up. How many times have people been to the medical doctor and the doctor says, "Well, your blood pressure is high. We're going to give you X medicine to treat that. But I also want to look at your insulin levels, and we're going to look at your diet to change things so that we can treat the cause of your high blood pressure. And in the future, we're going to aim toward no blood pressure medications." That's not a very common scenario. The real goal of functional medicine is to find the cause of an issue instead of treating the symptoms.

Your Role As a Patient

Patient History

Dan: So I can imagine in functional medicine the overarching health profile of a patient is incredibly important then, because there are all these things that could be causing it. So tell me a little bit about the relationship between you and the patient, how do you go about learning that history? What can I expect as my role, and how we interact as a client and a patient?

Dr. Brennan: That's a good question. The patient's history is very important. We send out a computer-friendly history questionnaire that people can use their computer to complete. It is a very thorough and extensive history, and then I analyze the data. And then I schedule a time to sit down. We have a whiteboard on which we start from birth through present looking at stressors that have occurred, emotional, physical stressors, that contributed to the current person. And considering their genetics and their environment up to this point in their lives, to look at what aspects of their lives need to be improved: diet, sleep, emotional stressors, chronic infections and pain. Those are all huge contributors to upsetting people's hormonal and

chemical balances, that if those aren't addressed, you're never going to get away from treating the symptoms.

Patient Action

Dan: So, in addition to you gathering all of this information and a deep understanding of the patient, it sounds like the patient, himself or herself, is playing an active role in the health process. So tell me a little about that. It sounds like this isn't for everybody, you've got to be an active participant.

Dr. Brennan: Dan, you're right. One of the ways to tell if your functional medicine practitioner is really looking to the causes of your problems, is if a good history is performed, and then are aspects of that history incorporated into the treatment plan? To answer your question directly, the patient is an active participant. And if you are not being asked to actively participating with your practitioner, you're not at the right place. You're not really getting functional medicine. Functional medicine has been used by certain practitioners as a way to build practices that are very profitable but don't address the cause of people's problems. I recently had a colleague who was diagnosed with melanoma. So the melanoma was removed and then he panicked and went to a functional medicine practitioner

southeast of here, in a different town, who put together an \$11,000 package for this patient. The package had a lot of therapies, asked him to buy a \$4,000 pulsed EMF unit. Plus another \$1,000 to use the practitioner's unit on a weekly basis. When I looked at this printout, what was lacking was dietary changes, sleep changes, with no advice on exercise besides walking.

The research is showing that cancer cells grow in a sugar rich environment. They've lost the ability to burn fats very efficiently and are kind of stuck in a mode of using sugars anabolically. So if you were to deprive them of a sugar-rich environment by changing the way you diet, changing your exercise, you can do so much more than doing the pulsed EMF and other fancy passive modalities. So, I talked to my colleague, and I said, "What you really need to do is--" and I recommended that he monitor his blood work results and how to reduce his blood sugar levels to what would be normal levels for someone who lived two to three hundred years ago and didn't snack, who didn't eat processed foods, and who worked a manual job. And there's ways to accomplish that by changing what you eat, when you eat, and how you eat. And then how to do things like interval exercises, weight training for increasing muscle mass. Muscles and your liver absorb most of the

glucose that's poured into your body, if their reservoirs are empty.

If you do eat highly processed foods, then the reservoirs of your liver and your muscle tissue are full of sugars in the form of glycogen. They can't take anymore and then that prompts insulin resistance. And then you have higher levels of sugars running around in your system. Through changing your diet and doing some specific exercises, you can reduce those reservoirs, and allow those tissues to uptake the extra glucose after a meal. And with the diet changes, you won't end up with huge amounts of glucose in your blood which requires another secretion of insulin, which can lead to further insulin resistance. And then it's a chronic problem that tends to feed cancer, and cause many of our current chronic diseases such as arthritis and chronic pain. So you can see where functional medicine for that practitioner who's charging \$11,000 for a lot of passive modalities, it's very profitable. And I can see where that's attractive to practitioners. But when you are looking from the patient's side, how would you want your family, how would you like your wife treated? How would I want my wife treated if I were to have them go to the functional medicine practitioner? I would want them to be addressed with the most recent scientific research, plus be an active participant, who's not just receiving expensive passive modalities.

Turning Genes On or Off

Dan: So, it's interesting. It sounds like you are not looking to be the most expensive, you are looking to be the highest quality. And thus, you are picking a specific type of patient that's willing to work with you in the process. So tell me, really, what do you look for in a patient? How do you know this is going to be the right kind of person that's going to employ the things that you tell them to do?

Dr. Brennan: The function of motion practitioner who's charging \$11,000 for the passive modalities, his target on audience is people don't want to change their diet. And don't want to change their exercise, and there's plenty of people like that out there. But the problem is, even though those modalities may have some short-term positive effects, who can afford to do that long-term? \$2,000, \$3,000 a month for a long-term benefits is not practical. I am looking for someone who's willing to change what they're doing now to affect what we call epigenetics. Epigenetic refers to the expression of your genes. You and I are born with our genes. And there's no changing that, but scientists have found that genes can be turned on and off by

your diet/nutritional status, exercise patterns, and even your thought processes.

What they have found is that many people with similar genes have different rates of cancer and other chronic diseases. So what happens is, that there are biochemical processes such as methylation which can turn your genes on or off. So your lifestyle affects the epigenetics or the methylation of the genetic material which can turn genes on or off. See for example that you and I are identical twins, and I have cancer, but you don't. I have intestinal problems, you don't. Well, your lifestyle is such that you have taken care of your genetic material, and your good genes are on and your bad genes are off. I have not taken care of myself. There is a lot of evidence that if you do start changing how your living, you can decrease your risk for chronic diseases fairly quickly.

What if I don't want to stop eating pizza two to three times a week. I don't want to stop junk food. I don't want to cook. I don't want to get decent sleep. I don't want to sacrifice my weekends and get anywhere near a regular amount of sleep. My genetics are now such that the bad genes are being turned on. The good genes are being turned off. Things like vitamin D has been shown to affect these genetic off and on switches. So without changing, I'm going to continue to be sick. Now if I were to change my lifestyle, I could very quickly - they

found - turn those bad genes off and turn the good genes on in a matter of days and weeks and months. That person has to want to change. And that's the kind of person we work best with.

Choosing A Functional Medicine Practitioner

Dan: So sounds like people who are really ready to make a change they're interested in-- so you're bringing the table this vast amount of knowledge so that the things that they employ - they can be pretty confident - are going to be worthwhile and are going to work. Which is exciting to me because I think of somebody like me. If I'm ready to make a change so many times, it's hard to know where to start. And so you might read a book on this type of diet or this type of exercising, but you haven't had the same results as somebody else. And to be able to have someone look at your history and look at your life and say, "This is what you need to do." That confidence knowing it's going to work makes a huge difference for somebody like me. So let me ask this then, let's say somebody's looking to find somebody to really do great functional medical care for them, what kind of things should they be looking for in a physician that will take good care of them?

Dr. Brennan: The kind of patients I work best with are the ones who are interested in the cause of the problem and not just treating the symptoms. So, an example of this is, someone's on a medication. And a lot of people come to me and say, "I would like to be off this medication. Not just stop it, but not need it anymore." So one option is to give them enough supplements where you have a nutraceutical effect, instead of a pharmaceutical approach. I can give you enough supplements oftentimes to bolster your physiology that you might not need that medication or need a lot less of it. But you're stuck taking an enormous amount of supplements over a long period of time. The alternative, and the one I think is the best, is to not give you a more natural version of a medication through a supplement, but to go ahead and use some supplementation in the short-term, but only while you're changing your life so that we don't need either of those, the medication or the supplements for long-term. I also utilize functional medicine testing. One of the reasons functional medicine has been really growing the last 20 or 30 years is the development of tests that allow us to look at the biochemistry of patients.

And with repeating testing, we can monitor how the biochemistry of the patient is changing. We can monitor the need for certain dietary/exercise/lifestyle changes and or supplementation, and make changes accordingly. One example

was a patient recently, a chiropractic patient. I asking her about her supplementation. She was taking a mini supplements, and when I asked, she replied "Well, I read something." And then, "Why are you taking this?" "Well, my friend suggested this." And she literally had a grocery bag full of stuff. So I suggested performing an organic acid test, and what's called a DUTCH test, a dried urine test for comprehensive hormones. Let's have you do these two tests, and these will let us look at the biochemistry. The chemistry of your body." The intermediaries, the end products, which science has been discovering. When I get the data back she'll just be able to save so much money on supplementations because will be able to direct her to very specific supplemental needs.

Making the Right Changes

Dan: So it's interesting because when we say active participant, a lot of times the tendency is to hear, "Wow, I'm going to really have to work at this." But in a lot of these cases, people are maybe working hard, but not necessarily at the right thing. So it sounds like this is simplifying the process. And, well, I need active participant. I need to be focused. I need to be engaged. It seems like this simplifies the process a lot. And that's exciting to me. And as you're talking it sounds like there's huge life

changing things here. As you're describing clients and patients that have had just incredible change in their life, this is an exciting thing to me. So tell me how would I get started if I wanted to become a patient or if one of our listeners or readers says, "We want to become a patient right now." What's the first step?

Dr. Brennan: Contact the office. We take your email address so we can email you the computer paperwork/history questionnaire, and then we just go from there.

Dan: Sounds great. Well, Dr. Brennan, thanks so much for being on here today. Look forward to talking more.

Dr. Brennan: Well, thank you, Dan.

